

**Joint Capital Planning Committee 4/14/10
Town Room, Town Hall**

Present: Committee Members: Catherine Sanderson, Carol Gray, Kay Moran, Diana Stein, Rob Spence, Doug Slaughter, Stephanie O'Keeffe, Sarah McKee
Finance Director: John Musante
Superintendent: Maria Geryk

Meeting convened at 4:35 PM

Mr. Musante began with an agenda review

Discussion of the bond proposal for roof repair and interior renovations to the South Amherst Campus of the Amherst Regional School System:

Superintendent Geryk updated the committee on the status of the South Amherst Campus renovations request. She informed the committee that the Regional School Committee approved a motion during its 4/13/10 meeting to authorize \$100,000 to reimburse the town for interior renovations to the South Amherst Campus. It was noted that this vote was unanimous. Mr. Musante said that the town would borrow short term and work out an arrangement and schedule for repayment with Rob Detweiler, finance director for the Regional Schools. The remaining amount of debt service that will be borne by the capital budget would be reduced to the \$80,000 for the necessary roof repairs to the South Amherst Campus.

Motion made by Ms. Moran, seconded by Ms. McKee: **We recommend a bond option of \$180,000 for roof repair and interior renovations of the South Amherst Campus.** After the discussion noted below, the **motion was approved unanimously, 8-0**

Ms. Sanderson discussed the Regional School Committee discussion from last night and noted that the School Committee was in agreement concerning the programmatic decision to consolidate the two programs currently housed at the East Street School and the South Amherst Campus together to the South Amherst Campus. Ms. Gray expressed concern about having kids attending class in the basement. Ms. Geryk reassured the committee that the basement has windows, and that students would not be spending their entire time in one setting within the building. Ms. Gray expressed concerns about kids from the different programs using the same bathrooms. Ms. Geryk did not feel that this was problematic. Ms. Sanderson discussed that the consolidation of the two separate programs from the East Street School, and the South Amherst Campus had also been proposed in previous years

Review of the Draft written report from the JCPC: Mr. Musante went over the draft written report. He went over format. The committee members took 10 minutes to go over the draft report individually to him/herself. It was suggested that Mr. Spence and Ms. Anderson be listed as members of the committee with their effective date in parentheses. The committee then went page-by-page through the draft written report for corrections and suggestions. Page 1, no suggestions. Page 2, no suggestions. Page 3, Ms. Gray asked if the percent of tax levy for Capital expenses was to be 6.5% or 6.23%. Mr. Musante clarified that this would be 6.23%. Ms. Gray asked about including library self-check out in postponed items. Mr. Musante clarified that this section was highlighting some large capital expenditures that have been postponed, not all postponements. Page 4, changes in language

about replacing cruiser digital video systems were suggested. Page 5, Ms. Gray questioned language about computers and photocopier at the library. The chart listing these items includes language allowing for other technology equipment. Page 6, Ms. Gray stated that the library energy project had not yet secured the 50% assistance for the library insulation, but may qualify for this. It was noted that the elevator in the atrium, although passing inspection, is currently closed for everything except freight. It was noted that the agreement for reimbursement for the South Amherst Campus was made by the Regional School Committee, not the Superintendent. Page 7, Ms. Gray proposed that the draft report include the committee's vote on the Patterson property option proposal. Language on the structure of the option was clarified. The committee discussed that the issue of the cost of infrastructure to the Patterson property is to be determined within the option agreement in the future. Ms. Gray asked if the documents pertaining to the Patterson property agreement are or could be posted to the website, either on the town or JPCP website. Ms. Gray noted that UMass is doing a tree inventory involving student volunteers and the Tree warden. Ms. Gray questioned whether we should note that there are funds left over for way signs from last year.

Various clerical errors and small typos were corrected.

Ms. Stein moved to **re-vote the committee's prior endorsement of the Patterson property option**, which was seconded by Ms. Sanderson, **the motion carried 8-0 unanimously**

Ms. Stein moved **that the committee endorse the Patterson option agreement** (wording from last meeting minutes), Ms. Sanderson seconded the motion. **The motion passed 7-1, Ms. Gray opposed.**

Ms. Moran moved **that the committee approve the draft JCPC statement**, Ms. Stein seconded the motion. **The motion carried 8-0, unanimously**

Ms. Gray asked to provide a separate minority report on the Patterson property option vote, to be included in the packet to Town Meeting.

Ms. Gray asked if we could have another meeting to organize the committee and vote a chair. Various committee members thought that this should be done in the fall.

Ms. Gray thought the committee should be doing a better job in looking at past capital allocations from previous years that have not been spent. She proposed doing this now. The committee felt that this would be best discussed in the fall. Ms. O'Keeffe stated that there exists strong oversight of spending in the town. Ms. Moran felt that the member boards that send representatives to the JCPC are responsible for the oversight of their own capital spending.

The 5-year capital spending plan: Mr. Musante discussed how the 5 year plan will likely change over time, particularly the further out one goes. The 5 year capital plan is out of balance by approximately \$4.5 million dollars Over 5 years. He moved \$1.66 million to the unfunded column. That leaves a gap of roughly \$3 million, roughly the cost of bonds for the road service plan and the new fire station plan. These have been identified needs, but we have not yet identified funding for these needs. Mr. Slaughter discussed that these need have been identified for a number of years by various town offices and committees. Ms. Gray suggested that we don't need a 5 year capital plan.

Mr. Spence moved **to approve the 5-year plan, as drafted**. Ms. O'Keeffe seconded the motion. **The motion passed, 6-0 with one abstention (Ms. Gray), and one absent (Ms. McKee).**

Ms. O'Keeffe discussed that we are presenting a picture to town meeting about what our capital spending plan will be on the horizon. It is not an agreement to spend any money. Mr. Slaughter stated that it is a process to identify potential future needs and be thoughtful about them. Mr. Musante informed the committee that the 5 year plan is approved every year by JCPC. Ms. Moran noted that the five year plan changes each year. Ms. Gray questioned why certain items were listed as unfunded on the five year plan. Ms. Moran noted that there will be new items added in the fall. Mr. Musante noted that there are 5 year requests submitted by various departments and committees. Ms. O'Keeffe noted that the 5 year chart is not a recommendation to fund or not fund certain items. The decisions are made each year.

Approval of minutes: March 19, 2010. Changes: Wildwood is one word, Ms. O'Keeffe was present at that meeting. Ms. O'Keeffe moved to **approve the minutes as amended**, seconded by Mr. Slaughter. **The motion passed 6-0**, with one abstention (Mr. Spence), and one absent (Ms. McKee).

Ms. Moran moved to **approve the minutes from April 2, 2010**, seconded by Mr. Slaughter. **The motion passed 6-0**, with one abstention (Mr. Spence), and one absent (Ms. McKee).

Speaking assignments were made for the capital articles for upcoming Town Meeting: Article 11-- Chapter 90 to be presented by Ms. Moran. It was noted that it is an opportunity to explain the capital planning process. Article 12 – Equipment to be presented by Ms. Stein. Article 16 – Patterson Property Option Agreement to be presented by O'Keeffe. Article 13 – building and facilities to be presented by Mr. Slaughter. Article 14 – Bond authorization (South Amherst Campus) to be presented by Ms. Moran.

Mr. Musante will recirculate the modified version of the draft report, Ms. Moran will continue to be the editor.

Ms. Gray reminded the committee that the Town Meeting bus tour will include a number of JCPC sites including the fire station, South Amherst Campus, Patterson property, and the cooling tower of the library.

The next meeting is anticipated for the fall

Mr. Spence moved **to adjourn**, seconded by Ms. Stein. **The motion passed unanimously, 7-0** at 6:26 pm

Submitted by Rob Spence, acting clerk